

## Tennessee Pollution Prevention Partnership Success Story



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## Farmed Out Nursery Restored to Natural State

### The Member

Bridgestone/Firestone North American Tire, LLC, (BFNT) Warren County plant began manufacturing truck and bus tires in 1990. The plant employs approximately 1025 team members involved in producing thousands of truck and bus tires each day. BFNT company-wide has been dedicated to environmental excellence and continuous improvement as demonstrated by all of our North American tire plants achieving ISO 14001 certification by the year 2000. BFNT Warren is also a Charter Member of the EPA National Environmental Performance Track. We continue to look for opportunities to eliminate and reduce waste, save natural resources, and prevent pollution.

### The Story

BFNT Warren has 660 acres adjoining their facility that they have restored to its natural state. This dedication is reflected in the new name "Partnership with Nature" given to the area, formerly utilized as a nursery. In previous years, the land was single cropped with trees and shrubs, depleting the soil of its natural balance of nutrients and frequently allowing erosion. Now Bridgestone/Firestone has restored the property to a natural state by stopping the erosion and reintroducing native grasses and trees. Once the restoration was underway, native wildlife also returned to the area. BFNT Warren then decided to develop it into a native wildlife habitat area.

Bluebirds are native to North America and have been under pressure from the loss of habitat for nesting areas and food. Habitat loss is caused by changes in land use and competition from invasive non-native bird species, such as English Sparrows and European starlings. Providing and maintaining habitat for the native bluebirds will help restore bluebird populations to their former numbers. Encouraging native wildlife helps in

the natural balance of nature. The Boy Scouts installed 34 bluebird nest boxes in late Spring 2003 and monitored the progress of bird nesting activities.

Now Bridgestone/Firestone is applying for certification by the Wildlife Habitat Council. Created in 1988, WHC helps large landowners, particularly corporations, manage their unused lands in an ecologically sensitive manner for the benefit of wildlife. Habitat projects on these lands are corporate-driven cooperative efforts between management, employees, community members, local conservation groups, and local, state, and federal agencies.

### The Success

The Boy Scouts monitored the progress of 11 nests in the bluebird boxes. These nests produced 25 bluebird and swallow fledglings in the summer of 2003. We anticipate greater success in 2004 with the boxes being available for the entire nesting season. Restoration of the native vegetation has improved habitat for many other birds and wildlife. Salamanders, rabbits, raccoons, white-tailed deer, coyotes, and bobcats have been seen on the site. Erosion control has also improved the quality of the site.

### The Pollution Prevented

Restoring the former nursery property is allowing the land to recover and provide wildlife habitat. Through Certification by the Wildlife Habitat Council, BFNT Warren desires to conserve the land for future generations. The Bluebird Habitat project has encouraged community involvement, increased the local population of bluebirds, and raised community awareness of native wildlife and the importance of conserving our natural resources.

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